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My Rose

and Other Poems

By EUPHEMIA MACLEOD

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MY ROSE AND OTHER POEMS

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BY

EUPHEMIA MACLEOD
Author of "Seances With Carlyle"

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1919

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TO

LORD LEIGH

PRESIDENT

THE NATIONAL ANTI-VIVISECTION SOCIETY, LONDON

"Res est sacra miser."

Sen. Ep. 4

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MY ROSE AND OTHER POEMS

MY ROSE

Seven times steeped in the flaming dawn,
  And seven in dusky eve,
Plunged in passionate pain and drawn
  Through throbbing airs that weave,
Silently, thrillingly, round on round,
  The damask petals glow,
With spicy wine-red shadows bound
  About the heart below.

Where were you, O you Rose of mine,
  Or e'er you were my Rose?
How your Giver could I devine,
  In far-off flowerful close?
How foreknow that it would befall
  That ye would come to me?
Binding fast in a rose-leaf thrall,
  A heart till now so free!

A SOUL

Fiat!—a flash cleaves the burning blue
Thrilling its depths, and a new soul is born!
Threading its pathway, without a clue,
Through the far maze of a wonderful morn
Touching the Earth with its shaft of gold
Tangled in rioting colour and scent,
Down to its place in the world, to hold
Essence of God in a clay vessel pent.

Drawn from the Infinite Rest and Love,
Tossed on existence of trouble and sin,
Flung from ineffable heights above,
Down to the hate and the clamourous din,
Choked by its dust and befouling breath,
Caught in its meshes of glamour and guile,
Hurled to abysses of mouldering death,
Yearning for respite and rest the while.

Out of the tumult and cark and dole,
Winning through steady endurance to peace;
Borne to where mystical pæans roll,
Drowning Earth's discords, which, fainting, surcease;
Caught in a glory without alloy,—
Ended the way that the bruised feet have trod;
Flaming on pinions of strength and joy,
Winging victorious onward to God!

With eyes uplifted to the stars,
  With faces gleaming pale,
With cruel marks of ancient scars,
  They pass by hill and vale.

The sacerdotal road of Pain
  The great procession treads,—
All shelterless the blessed train
  When threatening storm-cloud spreads.

Their shining vestments brushed aside
  The robe beneath reveal,
Pain-woven on Life's loom, and dyed
  Blood-red 'neath Sorrow's wheel.

They walk the thorn-grown ways of Life
  And stony uplands bare,
Through regions ghast, with perils rife,
  Where spines and thistles tear.

With shrinking, tortured feet they wend
  O'er brambles and o'er stone,
From crag to bleaker crag ascend,—
  But none hath heard them moan.

They smooth the jagged, bruising rocks,
  Uproot the branching thorn,
That others, breasting tempest-shocks,
  May find a footpath worn.

The burden of all lives is borne
  Upon their priestly heart,—
The loneliness, the pain, the scorn,—
  In silence borne, apart.

And none may know their dole save He
  Who leads them to their bourne,—
His standard but the nail-pierced tree,
  His crown, the wayside thorn.

What are the glorious robes we wear?—
Night's deep jet,
And violet.
Heart's blood of crimson, and, transmutably
Flooding the world, rich green, immutably
Hope-thrilled; lily-white; and rare
Broidered gold and silver fair.

What do we bear on our paten's gold?—
Winnowed grain
Of poignant pain,
Ground with the stone of utter weariness,
Purified thrice in hopeless dreariness.—
Wan hands these, the Bread that hold,
Hands which bleed with wounds untold.

What is o'er-brimming our golden cup?—
Rich pressed wine
From Life's hurt vine.
Fragrant it is and very flavourous,
Passionate throes have rendered it savorous.
Deep-steeped woe we bravely sup,
As we lift our Chalice up.

Whose is the Presence that waits our turn
Hearts' faint beat
With solace sweet,
Visioned through incense vapour sapphirine,
Clothed in effulgence soft and vespertine,
Kingly, yet so sorrow-worn?—
Lo, He wears . . . a crown of thorn!

COMPLINE

A Seraph's flaming pinions flushed
The paling western sky; when straight,—
A scarlet flood of colour gushed
And crimson with no earthly mate,
Commingled in one heavenly hue
Which tincted the horizon's blue.

Heaven's open gates shed living lights
That tipped the Seraph's spreading plumes
Suffusing all the sapphire heights;
While, as the altar-light illumes
The space around the central glow,
A bronzy haze held all below;

Within whose depths—a blur of gold—
The evening star kept vigil lone.
The brown earth caught on field and wold,
On pine and shrub, on pool and stone,
The glory of the dying day,
Which on it like a vestment lay.

The Seraph raising wings of flame,
Evanished in the upper blue;
And drooping purple shadows came,
That deepened as the darkness grew,
Till lo, the moon, through misty veil,
Gazed down, Madonna-like and pale.

THE YELLOW CALLA LILY

Samite-wove substance, of glamorous sheen,
Bathed in the glow of the rapturous morn;
Welded with earth-sap and moulded unseen,
Deep in the adytum of the unborn.

Lustrous patina where soft glories shine,
Sceptral, voluted,—amphora of gold,
Far in its depths shadowed splashes of wine,
Richer than rubies, its sheathings enfold.

Flashes of beryl flit faint round its spathe,
Tinting its curve with the ichor of Spring;
Anthers, close-clustered, the daffodil rathe
Rob of its yellowness, heavily cling.

Fashioned of sunshine, its wealth to proclaim;
Beauty, in sumptuous splendor, to weave;—
Lush is the blooming, outvying the flame
Born of the Dawn and the glory of Eve!

CASAL'S CELLO

Hush of prescient Silence!—Through aërial bars,
  Singing bells of tawny glory drift,
Floating down the misty, wonder-way of stars;
  Touch, and from the too-live touching, swift,
Flee in tangled mazes; spheres of cobweb gold,
  Humid, filmy, spun of flowing light,
In its path of mellow undulation rolled,
  Into glory passing sound and sight. . . .

Changed the rapt enchantment of the magic bow;—
  Limpid rain of liquid gold aslope
Pours in petillant beads on golden pools below;
  Each mellifluous, matchless, melting drop
Pulsing with canorous beat impellent through
  Floods of golden foam, that, falling, flow
Into shattering, crystal-sounding showers, which strew,
  In ethereal rhythm, the under-glow.

Stillness,—and a half-born shadow of a sound
  Hovers, fades, and slips, melodious, faint,
Into resonance of feeling, calm, profound.—
  With the music's quickening, sweet constraint,
Living coruscations dart, dissolving;—lo!
  Lapped in flames of loveliness that mass,
Merged in tremulous cadences, the throbbings slow,
  Ebbing, dying—into Silence pass.

Flooding down through great, sonorous deeps of Song,
  Harmonies reverbrant stir the vain

Dark, and shake the fearsome gulfs of gloom, while strong
Sinews of immortal sound upstrain,
Mount in pealing chords and filaments of light,
Span the void from Earth to Heaven!—Then,
Seraphs sing, while beat their joyous pinions bright,
Praise to God, Who gives such power to men!

SUMMER NOON

White gulls circle 'twixt the earth and sky;
Now dipping low, the ocean caps that vie
With them in whiteness to rebuke; again,
With sudden flash up mounting, poised remain,
Their wings clear cut against the dazzling blue;
While overhead, like kindred birds, slow through
The slumbrous heaven's expanse the soft clouds trail.
Their shadows splash the deep sea's sounding swale
Of golden green with bars of burning blue
And violet transparent glooms. A few
Small sails are gleaming snowy bright, the high
Untempered sun, beneath his kindling eye
Perfervid, quells the restless earth. The meek
Sands, blanched, reflect his flaming thought, and seek
In stillness to retrieve their too much light.
The beach flowers bend in heavy clusters, dight
With day's most ardent beams. The breath of pines
Comes warm and fragrant from the wood. The vines
Have closed their rosy trumpets' sweetness in.—
The breathings of a drowsy hush begin.

MY GARDEN IN AUTUMN

The purple pansy holdeth up
  The drop of gold in its sheeny cup,
The velvet foxglove bendeth low
  Its full-blown trumpet's rosy glow,

The stock doth wear a crimson gown,
  The daisy lifteth its ruddy crown,
The faint verbena wafteth sweet
  Its fugitive fragrance round my feet.

The cricket's treble calleth clear
  To hasten the steps of the halting year,
The rich sun poureth misty beams
  Over the hedge to the path of dreams;

My heart doth beat in fuller tone,
  Though through my garden I walk alone;
The year's fruition cometh nigher,—
  And swiftly cometh my heart's desire!

To have lived:—to have tasted many fruits,
Eaten heavenly food, and bitter roots,
Sucked the maddening juices penetrant
And the bitterest ooze of poison-plant;
To have quaffed ruddy, ichor-stirring wine,
Or the dregs of a bitter anodyne:—
This it is to have lived,
From dust emanatived.

Ere the golden-wrought bowl be broken past
All restoring, the silver cord at last
Be unloosed forever, we who rise
At the voice of the bird, so feeble-wise,
Would recover our strength before we go
Where we need not the light, nor feel the snow
And the wind-driven rain,
Nor greet the morn again.

For so much has been lost forever. Turn
Back the sweep of our days. For rest we yearn,
And tranquillity. Gone the goading pain
Of desire; to the hungered heart remain
But benumbing quiescence and futile grasp
Of the shards of broken joy; we clasp,
In our quavering hands,
Each granule of Life's sands.

Come, all ye we befriended on our road,
And ye hated, whom, adding load to load,

We oppressed and o'er-thwarted. Boots it now
That we loved or we hated? Nay, we trow
That the length of our years should merit naught
But a boon. Then heap high the platter, fraught
With delights clustered up,
And overflow our cup!

DWELLERS IN THE MOSS

Housed in dewy splendour, hedged with velvet green,
Happy little creatures, served by mould and star,
Clad by cosmic forces in a jewelled sheen,
Housed in dewy splendour, hedged with velvet green,
Fed with food befitting, fine as ours I ween,
Loved and helped by heaven as the angels are,
Housed in dewy splendour, hedged with velvet green,
Happy little creatures, served by mould and star.

THE INDWELLING SOUL

O sweetest Soul, That rulest all our souls,
Indwelling in the unconscious Infinite;
And yet the little flower's fragile cup
Upliftest to our spirits' reverent sight,
O'er-brimmed with Thy most fragrant sweetness, flushed
With all the tender glory of Thy might.

Most gentle Soul, That livest humbly strong,
Within the cool green veins that feed the grass
Upon the hillside, rustling in the breeze,
That also is Thy home; the wind shall pass,
The blade grow sere; but Thou, Eternal Life,
Wilt still abide through all the living mass.

O beauteous Soul, revealing loveliness
And radiance veiled in sun-caught cloud, or poured
With lavish largess down the torrent's flood;—
The insect's wing of jewelled film a hoard
Of beauty, perfect as the evening sky,
For Thou art there, its Essence and its Lord.

Thou wondrous Soul, beyond our highest thought;—
Whose garments touch the folds of ours; Thou King,
Thou All, in Whom these lesser selves are held;
Due worship would Thy many children bring:
From leaf and stream, from beast, from human souls,
There pulses back Thine own Heart's cherishing.

THE POSTERN GATE OF HEAVEN

The massive portals swing ajar,
To trumpets flourish moving;
And thunderous blasts are borne afar,
The sky's deep pathways grooving
With many a cadent star.

Lo, flaming angels throng the gate,
To greet the hosts that enter;
The martyr soldiers borne elate,
The hero in the centre,
Whom diadems await.

In pomp the martial pageant goes
Along the heavenly highway,
To find the fair, unwithering Rose,
They missed on Earth's rough byway,
Where harsh the thistle grows.

The Father, on His lofty Throne,
Receives them to His Bosom,
And gives to each a pure white stone
And sprays of Sharon's Blossom
With sweetnesses full blown.

Then summons He His wingèd ones,
With charities soft shining,
To hew a gate, with sapphire suns
Its jasper portals lining,
And cleave a space that runs,

With cooling streams and healing shade,
  Past chalcedony meadows,
To downs of green, and watered glade
  Of amethystine shadows,
    Where none shall make afraid.

Now, welcome to the fields of God,
  Ye chargers from the battle!
Whose hooves on splintered shards have trod,
  Whose ears the rifles' rattle
    Has deafened.—Now, unshod,

With tossing mane, ye brave, pass through!
  Your nostrils sniff the fragrant,
Refreshing airs!—As wont to do
  Are free-born things, ye, vagrant,
    Rejoice the long days through!

FOR THE DUMB CREATION

Ye have no cup
To hold the wine of your sorrow,
And so it foameth up,
And on the morrow
No sign remains
Of all your pains.

Ye have no voice
To tell when ye are mourning
And when ye would rejoice,
So foolish scorning
Assails your heart
In bitter part.

O, let me hold
The chalice up of my prayers,
Enshrining in its gold
Your cruel cares,
The needless pain,
The wreaked disdain.

Till Heaven a-thrill
Transmute the moaning impassioned,
With grace the chalice fill,
And woes compassioned
Shall comfort find,
Since God is kind.

WITH ROSES

Roses to my heart's dear Rose,—
Blushingly their leaves unclose,
Leaning, droopingly aware
Of the greater sweetness there.

FIRE-WEED

A splash of crimson steeped in filtering sunshine,
  A flame of amethyst against the blue,
Where crowding balsams stand aside in patches
  To let the clearer light beyond pour through.

A breath of sunrise fire transformed to blossom
  And pulsing in the slumbrous afternoon;
A wave of living colour on the greenness
  That spreads knee-deep its flowering grasses boon.

A rosy foam upon a misty ocean
  Of breeze-swept verdure, rippling to the feet
Of tapering trees, whose serried boughs unstirring
  Curve sombre in the quivering azure heat.

I bathe my spirit in your vivid beauty,
  Rare weeds, that aye bedeck the charkèd lands
And steal from death a glamour not surpassèd
    In gardens tended by our human hands.

THE LITANY OF THE LESSER SOULS

Men are praying in sacred fane,
  Sinner, outcast, saint and seer;
Incense-clouds mist the glowing pane,
And the solemn chants upstrain,
  Borne to the Listening Ear.
    Jesus of Calvary, hear!

From the glorious world about,
  From the saddened world and drear,
Swells the jubilant victors' shout,
Moan the helpless, crying out,
  Voicing their torture and fear.
    Jesus of Calvary, hear!

Holy hands pour the vintage red,
  Break the bread of thy Passion dear;—
King of Suffering, in their stead
We have nor wine, nor bread,
  Offering our anguish, draw near.
    Jesus of Calvary, hear!

What our warrant who cry to Thee,
  Pressing where, with mien austere,
Humankind would reject our plea?—
Only Thy compassion free,
  Reached by our helplessness sheer.
    Jesus of Calvary, hear!

COLOUR

Transcendent Colour, thrusting thy sharp spear
Athwart the flooding light of Heaven! How vast
The surging diapasons fluctuant
Thou loosest from its meshèd vibrant ray!
A slow rich glow incarnadines the East
And sweeps a regal purple on the hills
That tremble to the sudden hastened pulse
That leaps the gamut from the slow-paced red
To startling thrills of throbbing violet.
With what compulsive force the splintered lights
Ensplendoured shake the brooding depths, and free
Th' imprisoned wheels that roll thy chariot swift
From swarthy-sceptred night, and, penetrant
Pass star-besprent the pale-tressed hours of morn,
And straining through the golden glory, crush
The floor of reincarnate dawn, surcharged
With rosy petals! Lo! The ebbing blood
Of dying day thou holdest gloriously
Enshrinèd in the ruby's chaliced depths
Refulgent; expressest orbèd day
Within the sapphire's limpid coerule walls;
Thou steep'st the amethyst in tinted wine
Delirious; the chrysoprase to be
The wraith of sea and sand thou palest;
Form'st the coronal the daffodilly wears,
And pluckest from the fallen snow its shroud
To veil the vestal lily; drenchest deep
The rose in tides purpureal; disrob'st
The sky to gown the gentians, violets

In amethystine harmonies dost plunge,
And revelest in forest depths and pools
Of lucent brown. Thy garments cling around
Thy gleaming feet in opaline enmeshed
Resplendence, trailing through the radiant courts
Of Heaven, where dwells thy soul for evermore.

COMMUNION

Take, eat, in remembrance of Me,
  Life's bitter, unsavoury bread;
God daily shall send thee thy share:
  Take, eat, that thy soul may be fed.

Drink this, 'tis the cup of Life's wine,—
  Stress, failure and infinite pain:
Drink deep;—and thy spirit shall find
  Strength, courage, and God for the gain.

YOUR LITTLE FLOWER

You put a flower in your letter,
A little damask thing, but better
It spoke, its bruisèd petals staining
The pages white with vermeil veining,
Better than words of power,—
Your little flower!

An unwrit page is fair, persuasive,
Inviting words.—What words?—Evasive,
Unkind, relentless, callous, mocking,
The floodgates of dull tears unlocking —
Yours has for gracious dower,
A little flower!

And love may trace rare words and golden,
That forge a magic chain, fast holden
From crimson heart to crimson heart with
Enchanted links of subtle art.—With
Fragrance of love-steeped hour,
You sent a flower!

THE CAPTIVE LION

His cubs are awaiting their sire's return
  In their hidden, rocky cave,
But homeward his longings must vainly yearn,
  For poltroons the king enslave.

They give for the free-blowing desert air
  But a cage and racking pain,
For boundless dominions about his lair,
  But the length of a galling chain.

The voice at whose pealing the far hills shook
  And the screaming eagles fled,
Is silenced with goad and with sharp-pronged hook
  To a captive's moan instead.

The paws that have fought for his royal mate,
  With an iron bar they strike;
The tongue that fondled each cub's rough pate,
  They prod with blood-stained spike.

And he who the wide, lonely desert loved,
  And the heavens fervid blue,
Is mocked by the brutalized crowds, when shoved
  By the showman's prod, on view.

Up rickety steps must he toil,—the whip,
  Should he ever halt or growl,
Will lash at his eyes and his tender lip,
  While the fools with laughter howl.

Yet he remains still the proud desert king,
  And they still the low-born mob,
They cannot tame wholly the heart they wring,
  Though with suffering it may throb.

His dim, aching eyes see the desert far,
  Through the ghastly blur of lights,
And white, moon-lit sands 'neath the evening star,
  Past the city's cruel sights:

—The Khamsin is sweeping the desert sand,
  In a burning, swirling cloud,
As downward it blows from the mountain-land,
  With its far-flung challenge loud.

The king of the desert with answering roar,
  Is proclaiming his royal state,
For freer than aught on the sea or shore
  Is this king with his tawny mate.

His heart as a wild Eastern chieftain's beats,
  And with bristling mane stands he,
Defying the storm and sand-cloud heats,
  As untamed as the lighning free.—

His proud lion-heart was a God-given boon,
  With his desert freedom matched,
Be sure at your hands, whether late or soon,
  God requires the gift ye snatched!

THE CALL OF VALHALLA

There's a champing in Valhalla,
And a noise of sharp-shod feet,
And a clanging through its gateways,
And a steady, steady beat.

For the horses to Valhalla
Are racing hundreds strong,
And they're crowding, still they're crowding,
Up its pathways green and long.

To the forests of Valhalla
And its shady spreading trees,
They are rushing from the schrapnel
And the battle-blasted leas.

In the waters of Valhalla
There is healing for their hurt,
There is cooling for their fevered mouths,
And rest for ears alert.

Far from tranquil, fair Valhalla,
They have died a noble death;
For their countries and their riders,
They have yielded up their breath.

O, ye heralds of Valhalla!
Let your silver horns acclaim
These undecorated heroes
Who forego an earthly fame.

THE SPELL OF CASALS

I

Stealing, stealing, on soft-breathing pinion,
Floating half soundless away,
Luring Sorrow to Music's dominion,
Winning the soul from its sway:—

II

Fluttering fairy feet, are trip, trip, tripping,
Magical sylvan streams, a-drip, drip, dripping,,
Mosses and lacy ferns a-lip, lip, lipping,
Down through the rocky crannies, slip, slip, slipping.
Where the shadows of leaves are thrown,
And the nightingale, all alone,
Outsings the fairy choir;
The very dews aspire
To breathe a soft, faint sigh,
Ere yet the music die.—

III

The sweet-drawn bow
Prolongs the tenuous strain,
While silvery bells swing to and fro,
Chiming a low refrain,
On silvern sound-threads strung,
By playful zephyrs rung,
Through forest depths of song,
Where tuneful murmurings throng.—

Soft whispering waves that, filmy, fall
On filmier waves below,
Sink 'neath the hushing thrall,
And into silence flow.—

IV

Now the music flies, fleeter than the dawn,
Through swift measures drawn,
Tip-toes, leaping lightly from crest to crest of foam,
Chasing sweet bird trills where freshening breezes
roam
Among the falling leaves,
Where Nature gently grieves.—

V

Deep calling unto Deep,
Slow and strong and sure,
Echoes to shores obscure,
Where the lulled soul, asleep,
Waiteth Love's allure.
Through the wide air sailing,
Great-winged winds come wailing,
Evening's fragrance brushing,
As the tired world hushing,
Low they hover crooning,
Ere receding, swooning
Into something faint and far,
Borne beyond the farthest star.
Here Æolian strains are caught,
Into harmonies are wrought,

Where the planet spheres revolve,
Where the fine-spun suns dissolve,
Turning, burning, hurled through space.
Scrolls of mystic music roll,
Float and curl and interlace
Woven in melodious whole,
Down vast vistas sweeping,
Singing, loving, weeping,
Bringing gracious to Earth's need,
Sympathy in generous meed,
Threading thin to Earth's small ways,—
Dancing moths in moonlight maze,
Circlings swift of happy things
Borne on gauzy, airy wings,
All primeval sights and sounds,
Gathered in the joyous rounds;
Fountain waters, splashing, play,
Falling musical away
In their brimming, rocky bowl,
Where the feathered bathers trill,
Whence the singing rillets spill
Into deeper flowing streams,
Moving to the world of dreams.
There the resonant day and night,
Star-lit blue and pulsing light,
Merge in tranced sonorous meetness,
Till sound dies of sweetness.—

VI

The long-drawn moaning of unsounded seas
Troubles the slumbrous night;

With intoning, billowing might
They call! Their pleas,
Piercing the empyrean, commingle
With supernal pæans, which interflow
The star-filled vast, with strange, wild pulsings rife,
Where the new-born comets tingle
Into cosmic life.
The hosts of glory flood the throbbing air,
Vivified, aware;
With intimate breathings mystical,
Compelling whisperings musical,
Strong spiritual luring
To bliss perduring.
The spirit's inner ear
Is reverent to hear
The pleadings passing sweet,
With potency replete
To draw the waiting heart,
With gracious, heavenly art;
Calling, clear and long,
In insistent song,
Plunging to abysmal deeps,
Where the sharp-fanged torture creeps;
On milder sorrow's shory waves,
Sounding faint through shadowed caves,
As healing zephyrs, heaven-breathed fall,
And soft angelic voices call.
On rippling seas of sunning joy,
Full, luscious notes that cannot cloy,
In sparkling scintillations glance,
Outrivalling the sun.—Perchance

Their echo 'tis that mounts in shimmering foam,
Sunward drawing home,
The ambient heaven pervades,
And into blissful Silence fades.—

VII

Pure vibrant strain,
Through throbbing pain,
Triumphant drawn;—
With thrilling power,
The destined hour,
Has brought to flower,
At rose-steeped dawn,
Grief's mystic gain.
Silver trumpets unbeholden
Peal a rhythm true and olden,
Piercing through the glory clouds,
Where the whirling vapour shrouds
Primal springs of flowing sound,
Into human feeling bound,—
Deathless faith to sanctuarise,
Selfless love to eternise—
Human kisses, tender eyes,
Throbbing hearts that agonize,
Rejoicings manifold and swift,
Through the nascent music drift.
From the mountain's misty crown,
Wind-borne cadences droop down,
And melodic, trancing sounds,
On palpitating, living rounds,

Mount Heavenward. There,
Calling upward through the sobbing air,—
Again—again—again—,
Fraught with human pain—,
A long-drawn, quivering strain,
That breaks in golden showers
On singing birds and flowers.—Fly low,
Sweet bird of tremulous pipings, so
Your lilt shall not escape us.—Strow
Our days
With notes of perfect praise,
Your ecstasy bestow,—
Fly low.—

VIII.

Pulsing, thrilling, swifter, swifter,
Tell it, Tell it, tell it!
Spring's wild secret's flung abroad,
Spell it, spell it, spell it!
For the lovely drifter,
As the warm winds lift her,
By winter stern unawed,
Has swept the snows away
In her gladsome play.—
"Sweet is life!" she pipeth, "O
To live, live, live,
Where the dewy grasses grow!—
Hear my wind-caught melodies,
The wild full-throated rhapsodies,
My voice alone can give.
Take my kisses while you may,
Ere, I fickle, farther stray!"—

IX

The young, young Spring has vanished quite,
And summer woos to dear delight
All blithesome jocund things alive.
The silvery fish leap up, and dive
Beneath the singing water.
The harebell clusters sway
In blue-hazed disarray,
And the lily bends to the rose
Through the shimmering air that wrought her.
Round and round, blithe music flows,
While the summer breezes blow,
As the soul of the rose is born
Of the perfumed breath of morn
And the strain of a magic bow!

X

Butterflies pass in a circling maze,
Blurred is their flight through the sunset haze,
In the swift, swept trance
Of a faery dance.
Thistledown floats
With the sun-caught moats
That gleam
In the evening beam,
And drifting bubbles of golden sound
Float up from the faintly breathing ground,
And pass away
In the blanching ray
Of the rising moon,
As the dim hours swoon
To summer's croon.

XI

Autumn tosses her golden flowers
Upon the ground in petal-showers,
To the wild bee's droning,
And the west wind's moaning;
Thickly the petals blow about
In a startled windy rout,
Presaging the ripened year
And the brown leaves rustling sere.
Slow and tender are her ways;—
Soughings of the bending bough;
Vowings of the lingering birds
For Southward flight upwinging,
That there be no more delays,
Lest the winter wind come stinging;
Whirring, thrumming insect cry,
Dronings of the dragon-fly
Hovering over plashy pools,
Where the purling water cools
The whispering grasses,
And the low wind passes
Over nenuphars afloat;—
Not an immelodious note
Through the flowing music rare;
All the multisonous air
Steeped in harmonies divine,
Life's o'er-flowing, heady wine.—
Through the murmur, vision-thronged,
Glides a fine-drawn thrill of sweetness,
Some celestial strain prolonged,
Merging into living light

That trembles in its fleetness,
As it passes mortal sight,
Where the wreathing sea-mists melt
In the tenuous air, unfelt,
And showers of heavenly jewels scatter
Over frozen seas, and shatter
In rainbow, paradisic notes,
Fast and faster,
Lightly falling
From orchestral, vaster
Tones enthralling,
Threading down unvisioned ways
Of undevined delight.
With harmonical rhyming
And tinnient chiming
They set the Aurora dancing,
With flaming colours glancing;—
In rayings prismatic,
In pulsings ecstatic,
They shimmer as showers,
Of wind-raptured flowers,
Till caught in one glorious
Vortex of sound,
Which sweeps
Iridescent around,
And leaps,
As the echoes respond,
And the crystal notes sprinkle and strew,
In victorious,
Space-cleaving bound,
Past the stars and the blue,—
To the Silence beyond.—

XII.

On the dewy breezes floats
The fluting of a myriad throats;
The perfume of all flowery nights
Is borne on winging, rapturous flights
Of wind and bird.
Dreamful melodies are heard,—
The minor call of unseen doves,
The pulsings of angelic loves,
The winds of ocean far away,
Blowing o'er the mugient deep
To some far untrodden shore,
Where the lonely daystar tingles
Through the veiling Northern lights,
And the moan of waters mingles,
At the breaking of the day,
With torrential floods of sound
That curl and sweep,
Filling all the vast profound,
As their harmonies they pour
Adown the glory heights,
Through
The unimagined blue,
Where the suns their vigils keep,
And beneath their potent sway
The far-off planets sing
On circling wing.—

XIII.

Down the soft, seraphic way,
On the path of conscious Day,

With Mercy shod,
Tread the feet of God,
To haunt His world
That, thirled
Yet undiscerning,
With inextinguishable yearning
Hearkens the strong alluring
Of mystic harmonies, enduring
After their sound hath died.
Strange, melodious wooing,
To the Soul's blest undoing;
Till her halting steps He guide
Far from the safe and selfish ways
Into the light of blazing days,
Into the path of the thunder's leven,—
Undone,
Yet clothed upon,
And meet for the heights of Heaven!

YOUR COMING

An hour ago the landscape lowered,
  The flowers hid their bloom,
Unseen the apple blossoms showered
  Their fragrance on the gloom.

The wild bee's hum, the thrush's song,
  To deafened ears were borne,
The dusk of evening swept along
  The freshness of the morn.

When sudden, through the darkened day,
  You came upon my sight;
And lo my heart was blithe and gay,
The world, a world of light.

FRIENDSHIP

The passionate pulse of Love precipitant
May throb with ebbing beat and die away;
His steps may lag upon the languorous way
And halt for very weariness;—and grant
To Love all largess, yet, a mendicant,
He ever craves for greater guerdon; Yea,
A fugitive, he flies in quick dismay
From sweet serenity, unparticipant.

But Friendship's calmer eyes are dedicate
To hold within their orbs the shadowed gleam
Of soundless, unattainted deeps, to dream
Of quiet days, and see unperturbate
The threatening storm; unwearied, consummate
Their trust, and read in Life their own high theme.

From his stable roughly led across the fen,
Fed and watered quickly, groomed by hasty hands,
Up a gangway hurried to a dingy den,
Crowded in with others bound for distant lands,
Shipped to death or torment, far on alien strands;
Brown and white and sorrel, piebald, red and bay,
Gasping for a breath of air, a moment's play
Of bestiffened joints and eager tail and mane;
Nought but dead monotony and dull dismay,
Weighing down the noble heart and puzzled brain.

On the fields of havoc halt the lines of men,
Stern their faces, set their gaze, and firm each stands,
Ready for the fray, and fighting one to ten;
Golden sunlight glints upon their shining brands,
Moving in the dawn like waves o'er silver sands.
Little sunbeams glitter, shed in sparkling spray
On the harnessed horses, black and dun and gray,
Waiting with their masters' mid the ripening grain;
Heavy-headed harvest that will not delay,
Weighing down the noble heart and puzzled brain.

Men and horses clatter fast adown the glen,
Sweeping, swirling columns, till the sharp commands
Signaled from the hill-top, just within their ken,
Call them back to shelter,—shattered, scattered bands,
Few there are to muster after War's demands
Heavy toll have taken all along the way,—

Horses riderless, distraught, and men at bay,
At the signal turning reach the height again;
And the glen is silent through that weary day,
Weighing down the noble heart and puzzled brain.

L'ENVOI

Why, oh, why, this dreadful carnage and affray?
Horses who have all to lose and nought to gain;
Dumbly driven where the ruthless slayers slay,
Weighing down the noble heart and puzzled brain!

EVOLUTION

From the meanest form that breathes,
From the tiniest seed that dies,
There's a ladder up to God
On whose steps each life may rise.

Fashioned not for self alone,
Serving the Creator's plan,
Living just to do His will,
Flower and angel, midge and man.

Many forms are lost and gone,
Much is borne for little gain,
Yet a wondrous purpose gleams
Through the failure and the pain.

As they rise from dust to God—
Plant and beast—one life they draw,
And they mark the ages' flow
To the rhythm of changeless law.

CHRIST'S HUMBLE HOSTS

On the Holy Night there was found no room,
E'en in Bethlehem's lowly inn,
For the Lord Who came from His heavenly home
To redeem the world from sin.

But the cattle spared Him their narrow stall,
And their manger's fragrant hay,
And their Royal Guest, Who was Lord of All,
In this humble shelter lay.

So to Him are dear all the creatures meek
Of the meadow, fold and stall,
And the soul that pities these brothers weak
Shall be blessed by the Lord of all.

"NOT A SPARROW."

"Not a sparrow falleth", saith the Word,
"Without your Father, to the ground."
Not a feather floateth, zephyr-stirred,
But that His listening ear hath heard
And marked the sound.

Not a throbbing heart nor fluttering wing
But beateth against the Father's breast;
Not a helpless cry of helpless thing
But findeth instant echoing
In that dear rest.

When the mother-raven lacketh food,
Her young, distressed, upon Him call;
When the heron dieth for her brood,
Their pains he marketh and her blood,
Who seeth all.

When the Lord came down on Earth to dwell,
He had for hosts the humble kine,
And His baby head was pillowed well
On fragrant hay in that poor cell,
Become a shrine.

IN THE WOODS

Lured by Springtime's fragrance faint, I wander
Through the forest ways of tender green:
Fairy fern fronds spread their lacy pinions
Over velvet mosses where are seen,
Buried safe in depths of verdant softness,
Little creatures clothed in lambent sheen.

Tiny streamlets trickle cool and shadowed
Round the sun-flecked boulders, or, grown coy,
Hide along innumerable by-paths
Worn by elfin feet in dancing joy,
And with rustling grasses heavy curtained
From the insistent outer world's annoy.

Yonder bounds impetuous, leaping water,
Over high-thrown rock and widening shoal,
Still in radiant joy the law obeying
Which in oneness binds Creation's whole:
Then, the calm of Nature learnt, lo! deepened,
Flows the river to the far-off goal.

Treasure trove, the Trillium, nodding bravely,
'Neath a wavy canopy I spy,
Telling woodland secrets to the morning
Peeping through the leafy ceiling high,
While the watching boughs and dewy grasses
Listen with a long-drawn, happy sigh.

Giant trees who, age-taught, know the meaning
Of the days and nights that come to all;—
Why the rough, confining bark grows thicker,
Why the pleasant green leaves trembling fall,—
These with patience wait the seasons' coming,
Through the stress and sunshine that befall.

Hours will bring once more the effacing darkness,
Through whose solemn hush, the star hosts vast
Of the boundless heavens, gazing on us,
Kindly scintillations, flower-like cast
On the breast of sleeping Earth, revolving
Ever to the Future from the Past.

Thou Who knowest nor hour nor passing moment,
Nor confining depth nor breadth nor height,
But in ageless thought all ages holdest,
Keep Thy world through darkness and through light;
Man and insect, beast and little flower,
Struggling blindly toward the Infinite.

A SUN SHOWER

(AFTER RUSKIN)

When the rain-cloud hangs low and the great west
winds blow,
And rive it, and strive with their space-filling
strength
To recapture the foe with his golden-edged glow,
And drive him, and hive him, strong sun-gleam at
length,
In their palace of moisture and caverns of snow.

Then the hills are awake, as the dark spaces break,
And skimming and rimming the brink in their flight,
Like the swallows that shake their long wings, as they
take
The brimming dell, dimming the glare of the height,
They chase the swift flashes of sun down the night.

Looming through the mystic years,
Prefiguring our poignant fears,
Stands the Heaven-darkened Hill,
Where Hatred worked its hellish will
With nails and lance and taunting jeers.

Thou, whose flesh was torn by men,
Reviling all beyond their ken,
Wreaking, merciless, their spite
On Thee, the patient Lord of Might,
Thou knowest well the stab of pain!

Brutish mind and callous heart,
So quick to practise fiendish art,
Dull to cries of anguish keen,
Befoul the ages' blest serene.—
On Calvary we dwell apart,

Pressing close around the Feet
Fast-nailèd to the wood, while fleet
Whirl the troubled seasons past,
And ever-growing griefs that blast
Creation's joy, upon us beat.

There, unknowing, do we crouch,
Unheard, unseen; our rocky couch
By the conscient, Sacred Tree,
From which God's pity floweth free
To all his creatures, we avouch.

Man of Sorrows, gentle, meek,
Whose heart was riven, Thee we seek!
King of angels, swift and strong
To punish cruelty and wrong,
Let thy majestic thunders speak!

THE AWAKENING STREAM

The snows have fled with silent tread
From mountain top and plain.
The sleeping earth awakes to mirth
And claims her own again.

Her garment frore she wears no more,
But flaunts a veil of green,
With crimson dash and golden splash
And blue and rose between.

The new-born stream, a crystal gleam,
Bedews the cushioned moss,
And peeps between the tender green
The playful zephyrs toss.

It hurries by with eager eye
To find arbutus sweet,
And press its lip where violets dip
Unchid their dainty feet.

The kindly sun when day is done
Bestows a lingering glow,
The moonbeams bright the livelong night
Its ripples overflow.

The piping bird above is heard,
He drowns the world in song,
And still the stream as in a dream
Flows silently along.

But half awake its joys to take,
  The world around it glows,
A fairyland, a wonderland,
  Through which it ever goes.

O little stream, that in a dream
  Dost taste the joy of life;
Keep still thy state, nor pass the gate
  Of wakefulness to strife!

WINTER

Soft snow falls in starry flakes,
  Presaging Christmas-tide;
Sharp frost spans the streams and lakes
  With icy fingers wide.

Great trees dream of summer days;—
  Beneath their roof of snow,
Dry seeds learn in hidden ways
  How to sprout and grow.

Southward swallows long have flown
  To con new lilts for Spring;
Carols they have never known
  From tinkling sleigh-bells ring.

Autumn's flowers, touched by frost,
  Hang down their heavy heads;
Winter's flowers, hoar-embossed,
  Half hide the garden beds.

STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS

Life's battle is not always to the strong,
Nor yet its meed of interstrewn delight,
Nor yet the courage that can mount the height,
And, bursting into chords of soaring song,
Can triumph over weakness and its throng
Of weighted woes; nor yet the vibrant, bright
Celestial ray that on the inner sight
Pours plentitude of lasting light age-long.

To whom, faint, bears the burden of the day
And its fierce heat, and, wanting strength, can keep
His steadfast purpose unimpinged; apart
From comrade's cheer, with hope's shreds torn away,
Can stand alone, though barely stand; sweet sleep
To him shall come to chrism his royal heart.

"IS IT NOTHING TO YOU, ALL YE WHO PASS BY?"

In that tall and massive building off the street,
Whereto sickly men and women turn their feet,
In which pale and crippled children find relief,
There's a room of hidden horrors past belief.
Where the raw recruits of science ply their trade,
Their sickening trade,
With probe and blade.—
Is it nothing to you, all ye who pass by,
With an unhearing ear and an unseeing eye?

Firm foundations laid by Pity's gentle hands,
Strong-built walls that Mercy reared for sore demands,
House the poor and suffering; there the ill and weak,
Burdened with their dolours, rest and comfort seek.
But the sheltering walls conceal a cruel shame,
Most cruel shame,
In Mercy's Name.
Is it nothing to you, all ye who pass by?
Can you not hear the groan and agonized cry?

White-garbed women minister, with noiseless tread,
Hushed their voices, pausing by each sufferer's bed,
Helping, soothing with a gentle touch the ache.—
Yet, bethink you,—for that torture-chamber's sake,—
Do not drug your shrinking soul with, "All is well!"
For naught is well,
In that dread hell!
Is it nothing to you, all ye who pass by,
That the helpless are tortured, nor let to die?

After centuries of Christ-lore, heartless ghouls
Still may seize a dog or rabbit, and their tools
Play at will upon its tender flesh; and steel,
Clamp and needle, goads to measure pain,—the weal
Canting loud, forsooth, of man—, they freely use,
Remorseless use,—
Man's power abuse,
Is it nothing to you, all ye who pass by?
Do you care? Will you let them Mercy defy?

"I THIRST"

Angelicals and Powers, Dominions, light-enshrined,
Their heavenly fervours stilled, their royal tasks resigned,
Astonied, into awful Silence swept, and Dread,
Are conscious only of the shadowed Cross, the Head,
So patient drooping 'neath the crown of stabbing thorn,
The suffering Body, tender Hands, and Feet way-worn,
All passive, while the foolish people jibe and froth;—
Omnipotent, yet Victim of His creatures' wrath!—
These depths inscrutable to sound no angel durst,—
Through parchèd lips, the Son of God hath breathed,
"I thirst!"

No opiate-moistened sponge can quench that thirst Divine,
Those awful pangs assuage; for He, Who owns the rills
And tossing torrents wild upon a thousand hills,
Is parched in deeper wise than cooling streams may aid
He yearns for Mercy's rule, and simple kindness paid
To man and beast and veriest midge that lives and feels.
With prescient vision, sees He, looming down the years,
Like dolour borne by other souls; the brutes' wild fears;
The vivisected nailed as He by men accurst,
And tortured; and with yearning Pity saith, *"I thirst!"*

"IT IS FINISHED"

Vast, settling clouds of tenuous slime,
Half-palpable, and weirdly vague,
Float, fœtid with the fumes of crime,
Sink, loathsome, penetrant, and plague
Hell-haunted habitations dread,
Where Evil rules and Hope is dead.

Invisible to bounded sight,
Insidious, and barely guessed,
Vast Powers and Princedoms, Thrones of Night,
Arch-Demons, do the foul behest
Their Master-Mind commands, and surge,
In wily hoardes, a Devil-Scourge.

They slip relentless where they may,
They glide around a careless thought
And lap it up, and then their prey
Disgorging, send it venom-fraught,
Where most it may bear hurt. They tempt
With vagrant moods, with Pride, Contempt.

But best they love to haunt, and dwell
At ease within the cruel heart,
For that is likest depths of Hell
Where kindred spirits lurk, and start
In sudden gusts of fury wild
To lash at spirits white and mild.

Crude quasi-scientists can probe,
Unmoved, the tender nerve alive,

Tear quivering flesh apart, rend lobe
From lobe, through God-built fibres drive
Remorseless steel, the frenzied pain,
Dumb anguish scorn, and drive again.

Inhuman! Not for knowledge won
Their great Creator's praise to swell
Mar they His handiwork: Undone,
They seek forbidden fruit, and sell
Their Heavenly birthright for a mess
Of reeking hellish bitterness.

Yet Evil has no longer power
Upon unwilling souls. The gloom
That flowed but now, in noonday hour,
All demon-haunted, from the tomb
Of deepest Hell, the Cross to veil,
But hid the hosts who then must quail.

For from the Lips triumphant broke,
Far-ringing through the conscious Vast,—
Hark!—"It is finished!"—Christ thus spoke,
Announcing that the strife was past.—
Shall Cruelty then rule in aught,
Since Christ hath Hell's destruction wrought?

FAITH

Come up ye sorrows from the depths,
  And shew your faces grim:
Come up all dark and hateful things,
  All fears and horrors dim.

Now, stand ye firm and face the soul
  Ye rack and rive amain:
Whence comes your strength, O madding crew,
  That lash, and lash again?

From doubt's incertitude and sloth
  Your ghostly strength is won:
Ye cannot face the soul that trusts
  That God is foe to none.

CHANGE

The wheeling circle of the years sweeps swift
From aeon on to aeon. Involute,
It dips beneath the elder chaos-drift,
And whirls it into shapes irresolute.

It rides the long parabola of time,
And swings the pendant earth in solemn plight
Above the vast Eternities. The prime
Envaulted world its rim has curved aright.

It leaps the gulfs of bleak mortality,
And, quick'ning all the cyclic death in life,
It rolls, resurgent, with fatality,
To man, the prescient, nescient, born to strife.

It, from the spumings of its azure bowl,
Evolves a world, and from the slime, a soul.

A FIELD OF DANDELIONS

A pool of limpid brown,
A field in greenest gown,
With fringe of heavy gold
Defining every fold:—

The yellow flowers lie,
With all the grass and sky
Reflected in the pool
Of floating shadows cool.

A bird comes down to drink,
And preen upon the brink,
Among the flowers and ferns,
Then, twittering, treeward turns.

The sun dips down its globe
Upon the over-robe
Of yellow samite sheen,
Laid soft upon the green.

To greet the vesper hour,
With sun and glowing flower,
In glory unsupprest
The humble field is drest.

THE PATRIARCH OF THE MARSH

He twangs his tune to the babbling brook
That ripples under the pasture bars,
And sits and ponders with dreaming look
Upon the moon and the far-off stars.

The yellow lilies beneath him float,
Their dark green leaves are his palace floor,
And richly wells from his throbbing throat
The joy of Spring with its thrilling lore.

Below, the violet's fresh perfume
Floats up to incense the night with praise,
And overhead, in the purple bloom,
The white flies, fluttering, thread their maze.

The dear old Earth, with its thousand joys,
Glides smoothly under the vault of blue,
With never a jar in the perfect poise
That carries it all the seasons through.

The patriarch, on his mossy log,
Looks upward and knows that all is well,
For there he has dwelt, a wise old frog,
For summers more than he can tell.

AFTER THE CAVALRY CHARGE

"Charge!" and the wild rush surges,
Clatter, and, stamp, and cheer;
Each man his charger urges;
Time nor for pause nor fear!

"Charge!" and my lady's roan
Falls with a shrapnel wound;—
Shattered the bay horse, Joan,
On whose neck our baby crooned.

"Charge!" and a bayonet gory
Pierces our racer's heart;—
Reft of his old-time glory,
See his rich life-blood start!"

"Charge!" and they stumble madly;—
Farm horse and thoroughbred,
Trampled and mangled sadly;—
Would that my Bess were dead!

Never a moment to kill her,—
Up! on my comrade's mount,
While still the enemy shell her;—
What does a war horse count?

Ah! but my Bess was human,—
Kindly her soft brown eye,
Softer than eye of woman,
Lighted when I passed by.

What does she think of her master?
Ne'er did she fail him yet.
On I ride grimly and faster,—
Only—my eyes are wet!

IRA JUSTA

Fierce rage the Nations in their righteous ire,
That Freedom should be sepultured 'neath fire,
And pillage, and unfaith. No pomp but robes
Of regal wrath they wear. Their anger probes
The hidden purpose of the haughty foe,
Whose minions strike at babes, lay altars low,
Drag down fair womanhood into the dust,
All Evil make their Good, in Evil trust!

ENDEAVOUR

There are jeers in Hell and rejoicing,
  There is laughter harsh and foul,
There's a shout, their victory voicing,
  And there's many a demon-howl.

There's a ribald cry through its portals,
  That assails the ears of day,
And a ghoulish glee over mortals
  That are massed in deadly fray.

How they gloat o'er glittering flashes
  Of the thunderous cannon's roar!
How they throng where shrapnel crashes
  And intone their hellish lore!

In the fumes of poisonous gases,
  In their lurid, sulphurous glow,
Where the whizzing bullet passes,
  Are the devils from below!

For they joy in wastage e'er wider
  Of the stalwart man and beast,
And the moaning of horse and rider
  Is for them a fiendish feast.

And they glut their hate on the reeking
  Of the world's best blood to Heaven,
And extol with madness and shrieking,
  The working of Hell's rank leaven.

But the blood of Heaven's anointed
  Is the sap of Honour's root,
That ascends through ways appointed
  To mature its glowing fruit.

For—hark ye—every endeavour
  Has been first baptized in pain,
And the strength that waxes forever
  Has passed through loss to gain.

EVENING

The setting sun is glowing through the trees
And running harmonies of liquid green
About their bending boughs; his mellow touch
Turns yonder beech to trembling russet gold;
Like Horeb's holy bush it stands, aflame
Yet unconsumed, and from its depths a Voice
Commands the Soul to tread barefoot the ways
Of Nature's beauty and her mysteries.

THE PARISH NURSE

To Laura.

She passes by in nunlike garb,
  A star in dusk enshrined;
A spirit from a sweeter world
  Not wholly left behind.

Its mystery surrounds her still
  In gentle, chastened glow,
And lends a lovelier, statelier charm
  Than earthly spirits know.

In roseleaf gown and kerchief white
  She tends the bed of pain,
A vision of transcendent grace
  To woo life back again.

There's healing in her deep grey eyes
  Which tell of reverent thought,
There's soothing in that quiet touch
  With strength and courage fraught.

And clearer far than silver bell
  That rings o'er moonlit sea,
The cadence of those mellow tones
  Falls sweet and full and free.

As merry as a little child,
  Or stern if need demand,
Caress or praise she smiling gives
  Or issues grave command.

High angels company were meet
So rich a life to fill;
But she in lowly Mercy's task
Doth work her Father's will.

Sweet saint, thy sainthood seest thou not,
In high humility
Thou livest calm and unaware
Thine own divinity.

And we, who breathe a lower air
And live a rougher creed,
Are lifted up to tender thought
And spurred to nobler deed.

Thank God Who sends such souls as these
To bless our sad old earth,
And teach us through their loving lives
His Own dear Love's sweet worth.

AUTUMN LEAVES IN THE WIND

Tripping lightly on tiptoe you come,
Thoughts from the forest, of beauty and joy,
Gowned in russet and filmiest plum,
Tripping lightly on tiptoe you come,
Dancing to music, the wind your drum,
Come with the light-hearted zest of a boy,
Tripping lightly on tiptoe you come,
Thoughts from the forest of beauty and joy.

"GOD IS THE DEFENDER OF ALL SUCH"

God the Defender! Bend down from thy Throne,
Mark Thou the agony, hear Thou the groan,
Lifted to Thee by the helpless and dumb;
Swift to their rescue, Thou Mighty One, come!

Ceaseless Trisagions are borne to Thine Ear,
Sweet Alleluias, and Te Deum clear,
Chanted by Seraphim, spirits of flame,
Hymning the glory and might of Thy Name.

Up soar the prayers, where Earth's worshippers kneel,—
Father! Dost hear, through their psalms, the appeal
Wrung from the speechless, the tortured, the weak?—
Pleading for mercy, Thy succour they seek.

Creatures Thine Own Hand hath formed, to the end
Beauty, and grace, and affection to blend,
Here 'neath the human hand, helpless, forlorn,—
God-made,—man-mangled—lie bleeding and torn!

THE FOWLS OF THE AIR

I know all the fowls upon the mountains,
  Where the spreading cedars shade the brook,
Where the many rilled and limpid fountains
  With their murmur charm the hidden nook,
    As they crisp and ripple light between
      The water weeds of green.

Where the Indian torrents foaming, thunder
  Past the towering deodar and pine,
There the gorgeous Barbet perches, under
  The umbrageous branches that enshrine
    In their shadows songs and odours sweet,
      And for My pleasure meet.

Where the grey sea breaker dashes wildly
  'Neath the white gull's nest upon the crag,
Where the meadow stream meanders mildly
  By the water fowl 'neath river flag,
    There I joy in my Creation lief,
      In rock, and bird, and sheaf.

In the dawn I hear the chirp and trilling
  Of the humble peewit and the lark;
And the nightingale whose cadence thrilling
  In enchantment holds the pulsing dark,
    As their morning sacrifice of praise
      And vesper hymn they raise.

When the robin and the sparrow chitter,
  Sore an-hungered through distressful days,

In the wind of winter, bleak and bitter,
With compassion I upon them gaze,
And I bless the hand that streweth bread
That hungry birds be fed.

Far above the tempest-clouds the petrel
And the solitary eagle fly;
In the hollow oak the tameless kestrel
Knows her home; the missel-thrush doth vie
With the orange-breasted oriole
My bounty to extol.

For my pleasaunce have I made them, singing
In the cool of forest leafage fair,
Or athwart the dazzling blue upwinging
In the splendour of their plumage rare;—
Ever, 'neath the sun or shimmering star,
They hymn Me near and far.

"Creep into thy narrow bed"?
'Tis to wait a Morn more red
With the Sun of Righteousness;
With the Dawn of Happiness.

"Vain thy onset"?—Nay, not so;
Error at thy ringing blow,
Though she feign a sturdier part,
Quails and shrinks with coward heart.

"Thou thyself must break at last"?
Round thee men fall thick and fast?—
Yea, but truth and kindness move
Slow, in ever deepening groove.

And the steady tramp of feet,
Pressing on with patient beat,
Wears the groove more deep and wide
For great Love's incoming tide.

"Geese are swans and swans are geese"?
Must their folly still increase?—
Yea; but Folly cannot last;
Reason's rule is coming fast.

"Thou art tired"?—'Tis because
To the fool they yield applause,
To the knave they bend the knee,
Self-deceived by vanity.

Therefore dost thou make thy moan,
Deeming that thou art alone,
While ten thousand with thee fight
For the victory of Right.

"They out-talked thee, hissed thee, tore thee?"—
Be yet loyal, I implore thee,
To the righteousness within;
Though thou fall, the Right shall win.

"Charge" again then, and again!
Suffer, count thou not the pain:
Thou perchance at last shall fall;—
Let it be at Duty's call!

THE CALL OF SUMMER

The little brook sings on its stony bed
And the little bird trills in the tree,
The honey bee hums in the clover red;—
O, the summer is calling to me.

The sunbeams are glancing in sprays of gold
Through the quivering leaves of the birch;
The breezes are telling a tale of old
To the listening nests in their perch.

The azure is dappled with flecks of white,
And the daisies are covering the hill;
The buttercups tremble with sheer delight
And the grasshopper's note rises shrill.

The hours are tracing a lengthening line
On the flowers and the grass at my feet;
An ecstasy thrills like a passion fine
Through the colours that wave in the heat.

AFTER THE WAR IS OVER

After the War is over,
What will you do with us? Say!
Comrades of toil and endeavour,
Will you forget us forever,
After our hard-won day?

After the War is over,
Blinded and broken and lamed,
When we return from the battle,
Cast us aside as a chattel,
We who are bruised and maimed?

After the War is over,
Victory crowning your arms,
Where are the horses who bore you
Safely through missiles that tore you,
Sharing your fierce alarms?

After the War is over,
Coffers will scatter their store,—
Crowning the heroes with glory,
Feeding the babe and the hoary
Lacking their succour of yore.

After the War is over,
Spare us a tithe of your gold,—
Why are we useless *now?* Tell us!
Do not to hard masters sell us,
We who are early old!

After the War is over,
We who have fought in your fight,
Pray you to share your compassion,
Pray for our requisite ration,
Pray for a stall at night!

After the War is over,
Men who have won through our strength,
Men who know sorrow and anguish,
Let us not painfully languish,
Only to die at length!

After the War is over,
Who will remember the debt
Owed to the horse of the Empire,
Still to be paid by the Empire?—
SURELY we'll not forget!

O Little One, why do you lift your eyes,
And turn on your manger bed?
Sweet Mother, I look on the star-filled skies,
That shelter our lowly shed.

O Little One, why do you look so far,
And why do I feel alone?
Sweet Mother, I look past the roof and star,
Remembering my love-built throne.

O Little One, why do you softly sigh,
And why is that half-shed tear?
Sweet Mother, Earth's sorrows upon me lie,
All creatures a-wail I hear.

O Little One, why do you shudder now,
'Neath Mother's protecting care?
Sweet Mother, a thorn crown is on my brow,
A garment sin-wove I wear.

O Little One, whence is that tender smile
Illuming your baby face?
Sweet Mother, though evil prevail awhile,
The world shall be swayed by grace.

O Little One, why do you sleep so sound?
With never a thought of fear?
Sweet Mother, his Father's bright hosts surround
Your Babe,—they are mustered here.

O Little One, why did you come to me,
From radiant realms of good?
Sweet Mother, I came that the world should be
As kind as my Father would.

CRIMSON ALTAR FLOWERS

Rare flaming angels born
Of earth and dewy morn,
High vigil do ye keep
While souls are lulled in sleep.

Deep mysteries ye scan
Above the altar's span,
Down bend your radiant heads
Where Heaven its glory sheds.

Your crimson petals blaze
In reverent amaze,
As God 'neath symbols sealed
To Man is here revealed.

All Nature's pulses beat
In mystic union sweet,
As Man draws near to God,
And Heaven inflows Earth's clod.

THE DRINKING FOUNTAIN

(To the Metropolitan Drinking Fountain and Cattle Trough Association, England)

The City's burden of dust and heat
Falls heavy, irking, on heart and feet
Of jaded beast and outwearied man,
Who, straining, toil through the day's long span.

With parching throat and with heat-glazed eye,
They plod along 'neath a blazing sky,
When lo! the farer a trickling hears,
A wayside watering-trough appears.

How cool the crystal of water flows!
How sweet the music of water goes!—
God bless the givers who placed it here,
The drinking fountain so cold and clear!

"INTO THE HANDS OF A FAITHFUL CREATOR."

(In Memory of "BOB", a Manx)

Where are you now, O my furry friend,
Pleasuring, loving and blest?—You wend
Farther and farther from me your way,
As through unvisioned lands you stray,
Nearer to God, our End.

Fashioned like me from primordial slime,
Cherished like me by a love sublime,
Swept through the aeons and far-stretched space,
Set in the fulness of years and place,
Here in this world of Time;

Living your guileless and trustful days,
Asking no boon but affection's praise,
Learning in lessons denied our ken,
God, the Creator of beasts and men,
True in his words and ways.

He who hath moulded your lithesome frame,
Clothed it with grey with an under flame
Tawny and full, and emblazoned white
Over your breast and your paws of might,
All for His glorious Name;

He Who set pulsing your loving heart,
Who, with His gracious and potent art,

Breathed forth your soul in creative sigh,
Softly to shine through your topaz eye,
Still will his Life impart.

He, Who the freedom of day and night
Gave you with meadows of dew-sprent white,
Gleams of the moon and the warming sun,
Love and a hearthstone, your wanderings done,
Guards you, beyond my sight.

He, who when sickness had sapped your powers,
Tempered your spirit to quiet hours,
Knoweth how gently you met Love's sway,
Patient, submitting with meek dismay,
Trustful, your will to ours.

Now He regardeth your wider need,
Far from my reach, where the soul is freed,
Holding you safe with more strength than mine,
Loving His creature with Love Divine,
He Who is Love indeed!

INCENSE OF THANKSGIVING

Glory be to God on high!
And on Earth peace!—
O Thou worshipped One, draw nigh
Ere this incense cease
And its scent die!

Let it bear our praise to Thee
For Thy great Name
And Thy glory—Mingled be
Crocus heart of flame
And the Spruce tree;

With them Cloves of Zanzibar
And the Mace fruit,
Sandal wood of Malabar,
Western gum Tolut,
That all-sweet are.

Cassia, ships from China bore;
From the East Land
Stacte rare of Hebrew lore;
From Bahaman strand
Came a rich store;

From Arabia, Frankincense
Blent with pure Myrrh,
Cinnamon and Benzoin, whence
Fragrant vapours stir
The benumbed sense.

They who bare them saw Thy might
On the deep sea,
Where the thund'rous waters' height
Tossed its splendours free
To the blue night;

Hurled its green cerulean crest
To the dim dawn;
Plunged adown the purpling west;
Sought the moonlight wan,
In its unrest;—

All its pealing turmoil grand
And untamed caught
In the hollow of Thy hand,
Swirling there, and taught
Thou dost command.

Thou commandest, too, the hearts
Of the strong kings;
Puttest down whoe'er departs
Far from Thee, or brings
Strange fire's dark arts.

Thou exaltest high his throne
Whose delight, trust,
Hope, are in Thy Law alone;
Dost defend the just,
Though he lie prone.

Therefore bring we, from the fair
And the waste ways,
Gums and spices gathered, ere
Came the evil days,
Bidding despair;

Gathered also in the stress,
Of a stern strife,
When through hours of bitterness
We, in throes of life
Trod Thy Wine-Press.

God of battles as of peace,
Of the weak, God,
And of valiant hearts, release
Thou the souls down-trod
Night to surcease.

Lo, our incense sweet ascends
In a faint mist,
Breathes of Grace that thought transcends
In this Eucharist,
And all ill ends.

Only Thou art holy, Lord!—
In Thy hid ways,
Thou dost lead Thy people toward
Peace and length of days,
And the sheathed Sword!

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